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## **Females' Appraisal of own Ego Function by Self and Spouse and its Relation to their Quality of Marital Life**

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### **Abstract:**

*Background: Prior study (Kurdek , 1993) pointed out that spouses with differences in attitudes, values and beliefs may have impact on marital relationship . But spouse appraisal or views regarding other partners also may have impact on marital relationship which is not yet explored.*

*Objectives: The present study aimed to study the relationship between the females' perception of their spouses' appraisal of females' ego function and its relationship to different components of females' marital quality.*

*Materials and Methods:*

*The sample is comprised of 50 married females (age from 25-35 years). They were administered Ego function Assessment scale (Bellak ,1973) and Marital quality scales (Shah, 1991) .*

*Results: Results revealed that greater appraisal of autonomous functioning was positively correlated with total marital quality of the females, signifying poorer quality of marital lives of females. It may be due to a mismatch with females' greater value for enjoying a socially prescribed dependent role.*

*On the other hand, deficit appraisal of stimulus barrier that signify females' appraised their husband's evaluate them (females) as less efficient in motoric behavior, affective states and cognitive processes is well received by the female, enhancing their quality of marital life. Moreover, deficit appraisal of drive control is positively correlated with poor marital life of married females which may be attributed to a sense of personal inferiority in married young women. Deficit appraisal of synthetic integrative function in female by the male spouse, most intimate person, is self derogatory to the females. This underestimation by the male spouse in the domain of one's inner integrity may explain the poor marital quality in the female.*

*Conclusion: Our findings may have therapeutic implication in understanding the female psyche*

**Keywords:** *Deficit appraisal, Excess appraisal, ego functions, Quality of marital life, 1<sup>st</sup> appraisal, 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal,*

### **1. Introduction**

Importance of commonality in interests, attitudes, and behaviour in developing intimacy between two individuals is well documented (Sullivan, 1953; Byrne, 1971; Clore & Byrne, 1974; Baxter & West, 2003). Engagement in activities of mutual interest or satisfaction in self disclosure (Youniss & Smollar, 1985) has been considered as the prime factor for satisfying friendship. Attitudinal similarity acts as an important factor for mutual attraction which is also evident in research conducted in different cultures, like in Indian subculture (Porwal & Jain, 1985). But friendship usually centers on mutual sharing in some specific domains of interest. One does not count the dissimilarity with friends in other non- shared spheres of life. Degree of intimacy reaches its apex in marital relationship. According to Gonzaga, Campos and Bradbury (2007) similarity in emotional experience between couples during period of dating and early days of marriage contributes positively to the partnership quality. Appraisal of emotional similarity between couples converges in romantic intimacy and in relationship satisfaction.

Though partner selection may be based on appraisal of mutual interest in selected domains, or based on the synchronization in mental tuning in some issues of mutual importance in their lives, or in satisfaction in self- disclosure with each other, marriage, however, is a life-long companionship. In lifetime companionship, common sharing between two persons cannot be the only criterion to maintain a satisfactory conjugal life, rather, a well-knit cognitive- emotional appraisal of the spouse appears to be more important that has the potency to minimize the impact of dissimilarity between two persons who are engaged in marital bondage and gracefully continue a dignified relationship.

Couple relationship in a marriage may provide one with emotional gratification support & security and may act as a buffer against mental health problems, loneliness, and unhappiness. It changes an individual's perspective from egocentrism to the other centeredness to consider the likes and dislikes of the partner, to compromise one's own desire at times in favor of other (Cox 1990). From the perspective of ego psychology, relationship is described as potent factor which emphasizes on acceptance of the individual's worth, uniqueness, respect for the right of self-determination and non-judgmental attitude towards themselves (Goldstein, 1995; Schamess, 2011). Kurdek (1993) pointed out that spouses with differences in attitudes, values and beliefs may experience marital problems owing to their differences in appraisal of shared events from incompatible frames of reference. Possibly in optimally positive frame of reference marital satisfaction is positively related not only to similarity between spouses but also on assumed similarity they appraise in each other.

Since any absolute reality irrespective of one's construction of reality is almost a myth and interpersonal perception is mediated by how one constructs reality (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978) from his frame of reference, one's perceived appraisal of how another person perceives them is more a reality than what the other person actually thinks of her/him.

The present study aims to find out-

- The disparity between females' appraisal of her own ego functions and their perception of appraisal of the same by their male partners.
- The relationship between the females' perception of appraisal of their ego functions by their male partners and the different components of quality of marital life of the female spouse.
- Determination of degree of prediction of females' perception of appraisal of their ego functions by their male partners on the marital quality of the females.
- Determination of components of ego functions of both appraisals by principal component method and its relation to quality of marital life of females.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Participants

#### 2.1.1. Sample

The sample comprised of 50 married females from urban area and qualified with minimum of graduation degree. Upper age limit of the participants were restricted to 35.

#### 2.1.2. Inclusion Criteria

- Fifty married females who have chosen their own life partner have been selected as premarital engagement leads the couple to gain more insight into one another's personalities through mutual exploration of their relationship. Unlike love marriage, in arranged marriage (when spouse is selected by the family) the possibility of acquaintance between couples is minimal prior to marriage. To obviate the confounding effect of two distinct types of marriages on the results, the females only with love marriage has been included in the study.
- The participants have been selected from sub-urban areas of 4 districts in West Bengal (13 couples from Hooghly, 13 couples from Howrah, 12 couples from Bardhaman and 12 couples from Nadia) based on purposive sampling method
- The participants were within the age range of 25 and 35 years with age mean of 31.32 years and SD of 2.61. They are married for at least 5 years, having at least one child
- They were Hindu and Bengalee.
- Non-working females were selected as participants to avoid the compounded effects of various types of jobs they could be engaged in.
- They had at least 15 years of education.
- Family income was within the range of Rs. 8000 -20000 per month.
- The females did not suffer from psychological malaise as detected on General Health Questionnaire

#### 2.1.3. Exclusion Criteria

- The females who suffered from psychological malaise.
- The females who were suffering from any chronic or major health issues.
- The females who have any history of divorce.
- The married females who do not have any child.

### 2.2. Measures

#### 2.2.1. Socio-Demographic Data Sheet

It consists of personal information about the subject regarding their sex, age, duration of marriage, number of children, type of marriage, educational qualification, family income etc.

### 2.2.2. Marital Quality Scale

Marital quality includes marital adjustment as well as happiness and satisfaction. The selection of Marital quality scale developed by Saha (1995) is of much importance since it attempts to probe 12 factors of marital quality, namely-Understanding, Satisfaction, Rejection, Affection, Despair, Decision making, Discontent, Dissolution potential, Dominance, Self –disclosure, Trust and Role functioning.

### 2.2.3. Ego functions Test

Ego functions are relatively stable personality variables concerned with organizing the other and inner stimuli (Bellak, 1973). This is related to ego strength of the person. Anna Freud (1936) listed the following essential ego functions-

- The test of inner and other reality
- Building up of money
- Synthetic function
- Ego's control of mobility

Hartmann, Kris, and Lowenstein (1946) referred to thinking, perception and action as the three main functions of ego but pointed out that these ego functions are frequently in the service of id and super ego.

Bellak, Hurvich and Gediman (1973) identified 12 separate ego functions. These are

- Reality testing (RT)
- Judgment (JD)
- Sense of reality (SR)
- Drive control (DC)
- Object relation (OR)
- Thought process (TP)
- Adaptive regression in the service of the ego (AR)
- Defensive function (DF)
- Stimulus barrier (SB)
- Autonomous function (AF)
- Synthetic integrative function (SR)
- Sense of mastery and competence (MC)

For the present study Ego Function Assessment Scale (Bellak, 1973) was used.

### 2.2.4. General Health Questionnaire-Form 28 (Goldberg, 1979) as Screening tool

It is a self-administrative questionnaire consisting 28 items which was used as screening tool to detect the psychiatric distress in the subjects. Those who have crossed the cut off score (4 out of 28), was not considered for the present study.

### *2.3. Procedure*

The 77 participants were approached individually, the purpose of the study was explained to them. Only those subjects who gave consent and screened through GHQ were included in the study. Those who scored less than 4 in GHQ, were selected in the study and were administered the rest of the questionnaires. Approximately one 2 hours session was required to collect data for each female. After excluding 27 participants who scored more than 4, selected 50 married females were administered the Marital quality Scale and Ego functions assessment Scale. Confidentiality of the result was assured to them. The questionnaires were administered following a particular order.

- Socio-Demographic Data Sheet
- General Health Questionnaire Form 28 (Goldberg, 1979)
- Ego function assessment (EFA) Scale (Bellak, 1973)
- Marital Quality Scale (Anisha Saha, 1995)

In Ego Function Assessment Scale, two appraisals of the subjects have been considered.

- The first one has been taken to assess one's appraisal of her own ego functions as she perceives it, that is self- appraisal (will be referred as first appraisal);
- The second one is related to females' appraisal of males' perception of them (will be referred as second appraisal).

### 2.3.1. Instruction for Ego Functioning Assessment (EFA) Scale

Regarding the first appraisal, the instruction of the EFA Scale as such is applicable.

In case of female's perception of her spouse's appraisal of her own ego functions(second appraisal) the following instruction has been given:

There are some questions related to individual's psychological characteristics. Each question is followed by three alternative answer choices, i.e., 'rarely', 'sometimes' and 'often'. Please read each question carefully and mark your answer by putting a tick mark on one alternative which reveals your husband's perception of your psychological characteristics. "If your husband is asked how you view your wife in following questions, what will be his answer regarding you from the given alternatives?" There is no right or wrong answer and be sure that you have responded to all the questions.

### 2.3.2. Scoring and Interpretation of the Data Have Been Done in Two Categories.

1<sup>st</sup> Appraisal- Females' appraisal of her own ego functions

2<sup>nd</sup> Appraisal-Female's appraisal about her spouse's appraisal about her ego functions.

### 2.4. Statistical Analysis

The Mean and Standard deviation of the data obtained from 1<sup>st</sup> appraisal and 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal have been computed. The data were tested for homogeneity of variance using the Levene's test in SPSS 16.0. Since most of the variables found to be homogenous, parametric analysis was carried out. Paired sample t-test was used to assess the differences between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal of the subjects.

Product moment correlation analysis was computed to examine the relationship between the identified domains of 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal of ego function and different domains of marital quality scale scores. Stepwise multiple regression analysis was done to find out the contribution of components and selected domains of ego function to the marital quality of females. The critical value required for significance was set at 0.05 level. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 was used for analyses and all reported p values are two-tailed.

For further analysis, Principle component analysis was done to determine the components of ego function on 1<sup>st</sup> appraisal and 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal. Thus, the domains of ego function on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal which have the maximum loading have been identified. Stepwise regression analysis of component 1 of both appraisals of ego function have been determined signifying maximum loading on marital quality of females.

### 3. Results

The data obtained from females were systematically arranged and properly tabulated with respect to each of the variables considered in the current research.

The Means, Standard deviation of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal and result of paired 't' test between two appraisals have been summated in the Table 1; Correlation coefficient and Regression analysis are summated in Table 2 and Table 3 respectively; . Principle component analysis (PCA) have been summated in the Table 4

Ego Function	First Appraisal		Second Appraisal		Paired sample t-test (p value)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
RT	16.06	3.3	16.76	2.96	.16
JD	14.16	3.3	13.66	2.96	.87
SR	16.64	3.28	16.38	4.13	.58
DC	13.48	3.33	10.72	3.17	.002**
OR	13.86	3.35	13.98	4.7	.59
TP	14.42	3.06	14.2	2.63	.87
AR	10.22	3.55	9.94	3.68	.67
DF	10.28	3.25	15.32	3.26	.000**
SB	13.66	3.23	11.16	3.07	.002**
AF	13.28	3.1	15.1	4.29	.000**
SF	16.26	3.65	9.72	2.57	.006**
MC	10.98	3.68	11.44	3.78	.48

Table 1: Comparison between 1<sup>st</sup> appraisal and 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal

\*  $p < 0.05$  level

\*\*  $p < 0.01$  level

The results of paired sample t-test regarding 12 dimensions of ego functions of females (between their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal), revealed that according to females' appraisal, males significantly overestimated them in case of Defensive functioning and Autonomous function compared to the females' first appraisal. But the females perceive their husband (second appraisal) to underestimate in case of Drive control, Stimulus barrier and Synthetic Integrative Functions than the females rated themselves (first appraisal).

	RT	JD	SR	DC	OR	TP	AR	DF	SB	AF	SF	MC
Total Marital Quality				-.587**						0.314*	-0.509**	
Understanding				-.482**								
Rejection				-.363**							-0.286*	
Satisfaction									0.355*	0.292*	-0.386**	
Affection									.352*	0.234*	-0.316*	
Despair								.281*	.444**			
Decision Making				-.553**		-.290*					-0.517**	
Discontent										0.284*	-0.348	
Dissolution Potential											-0.304*	
Dominance				-.302*								
Self disclosure										.284*		
Trust				-.289*							-.381**	
Role functioning										.392*	-.389*	

Table 2: Correlations between 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal and the different domains of females' marital quality\*  $p < 0.05$  level\*\*  $p < 0.01$  level

Dependent Variable	Predictor variables	Adjusted R Square	F	Significance level	Beta co-efficient
	1.SF	.123	7.715	.008	-.375
1. Understanding (Marital quality)	2.SF AR	.193	6.724	.003	-.441 -.299
	1.SF	.175	11.384	.001	-.438
2. Rejection (Marital quality)	2.SF SB	.232	8.410	.001	-.542 .398
	1.SF	.136	8.714	.005	-.392
3. Satisfaction (Marital quality)	2.SF SB	.278	10.434	.000	-.544 .421
	3. SF SB MC	.325	8.855	.000	-.682 .394 -.284
	4.SF SB MC DC	.372	8.271	.000	-.501 .449 -.302 -.323
4. affection (Marital quality)	SF	.132	8.430	.006	-.386
5. despair(Marital quality)	SB	.087	5.642	.022	
6. decisionmaking(Marital quality)	1.SF 2.SF SB	.063 .170	4.274 6.009		
	1.DC	.104			
7. Discontent(Marital quality)	2.DC ORE	.170	6.032	.005	
	3.DC ORE AF	.241	6.176	.001	
8. Dissolution potential(Marital quality)	SF	.074	4.905	.032	
9. Dominance (Marital quality)	SF	.077	5.069	.029	
10. Self Disclosure(Marital quality)	SF	.062	4.215	.046	
	1.SF	.127	8.153	.006	
11. Trust(Marital quality)	2.SF SB	.240	8.721	.001	
	3.SF SB MC	.311	8.385	.000	
	1.SF	.081	5.339	.025	
12. Role functioning	2.SF MC	.155	5.494	.007	
13. Total MQ composite score	1.SF	.243	16.751	.000	-.509

	2.SF SB	.338	13.496	.000	-.635 .349
	3.SF SB MC	.382		11.082 .000	-.768 .324 -.275

Table 3: Stepwise multiple Regression between components of Independent variable (2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal) and dependent variable (the different components of females' marital quality).

- The results in Table 2 indicates that the inverse correlation of appraisal of drive control with understanding, rejection, decision making, dominance and trust dimensions of females' positive aspects of marital quality signify better the appraisal of drive control, better the quality of marital life in females. It was also observed from Table 3 that drive control alone predicted the variance of discontentment of marital quality by 10.4% and satisfaction by 37.2% jointly with synthetic integrative function, stimulus barrier and mastery-competence. The negative b values suggest the positive impact of drive control on the aforesaid aspects of marital quality.
- Likewise, an inverse correlation of appraisal of synthetic integrative function with rejection, satisfaction, affection, decision making, dissolution potential, trust and role functioning of females' marital quality are also indices of better quality of marital life being associated with better appraisal of synthetic integrative function. It predicted the functions of 9 domains of marital quality, understanding (12.3%), rejection (17.5%), satisfaction (13.6%), affection (13.2%), decision making (6.3%), dissolution potential (7.4%), self-disclosure (6.2%), trust (12.7%) and role functioning (8.1%) along with the marital quality as a whole (24.3%). The negative b value for all the domains of marital quality suggests that the positive second appraisal of synthetic integrative function facilitates quality of marital life.
- However, the direct correlation of second appraisal of defensive function with the feeling of despair in females is suggestive of greater appraisal score of defensive function is being associated with greater despair, an index of poor marital quality. Though this domain of ego function did not find to be significant predictor of domains of marital quality.
- Similarly, second appraisal of stimulus barrier when directly correlated to satisfaction, affection and despair domains of marital quality signify poor quality of marital life. Stimulus barrier has also been found to predict despair by 8.7%. b value is suggestive of lesser the feeling of despair in the females with greater appraisal of stimulus barrier. However Stimulus barrier and Synthetic integrative function combatively predicted the feeling of rejection by 23.2%, satisfaction 27.8%, decision making 17% and trust 24% explaining 38.2% of total marital quality, but when synthetic integrative function had the positive impact on the aforesaid variables, the stimulus barrier showed a negative impact on those variables of marital quality.
- Autonomous functioning too is positively associated with satisfaction, affection, discontentment, self disclosure and role functioning which signify poor quality of marital life to be associated with greater appraisal of autonomous function. This function of ego predicted domain of discontentment of marital quality to the extent of 24.1% by combining two ego functions (object relation and drive control). The positive b values suggested the negative impact of autonomous function on the aforesaid aspect of marital quality.

a) Rotated Component Matrix				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Initial Eigenvalues	3.170	2.115	1.425	1.144
% of Variance	26.420	17.627	11.878	9.534
Cumulative %	26.420	44.047	55.925	65.459
RT	<b>.466</b>	-.227	.418	-.419
JD	.074	.115	<b>.816</b>	.279
SR	<b>.593</b>	-.063	.279	-.266
DC	.177	-.312	<b>.789</b>	-.139
OR	<b>.583</b>	.163	.338	-.313
TP	<b>.828</b>	-.006	-.045	.020
AR	-.185	<b>.604</b>	.359	-.210
DF	<b>.789</b>	-.011	.153	.120
SB	.098	-.155	.120	<b>.824</b>
AF	<b>.626</b>	.162	-.063	.199
SF	.058	<b>.837</b>	-.196	-.145
MC	.200	<b>.825</b>	-.108	.121

Table 4: Principle component analysis for identifying components of ego function

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

In the above Table 4a, rotated component matrix and percentage of variances for each component of 1<sup>st</sup> appraisal of ego function, have been depicted. Eigen values greater than 1 have been extracted; hence four components have been identified as it explained approx 65% of total variability with approx 35% loss of information. As 1<sup>st</sup> component alone explained 26.42%, only 1<sup>st</sup> factor is considered for the discussion in the present study.

1<sup>st</sup> component is comprised with Reality testing (.466), Sense of Reality(.593), object relation(.583), thought process(.828), defensive functioning(.789), autonomous functioning(.626) evident from rotated component matrix table. So, Reality testing, Sense of Reality, object relation, thought process, defensive functioning and autonomous functioning have been identified as the most representative constellation of total 12 constellations of ego function in 1<sup>st</sup> Appraisal as these explained maximum loading on the variable (ego function).

b) Rotated Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>			
	Component		
	1	2	3
Initial Eigenvalues	4.928	1.806	1.343
% of Variance	41.065	15.046	11.195
Cumulative %	41.065	56.11	67.306
RT	<b>.703</b>	.226	-.073
JD	<b>.881</b>	.110	-.054
SR	<b>.724</b>	.307	-.081
DC	<b>.805</b>	.299	-.209
OR	<b>.638</b>	.165	.002
TP	.238	<b>.886</b>	-.067
AR	.288	-.126	<b>.740</b>
DF	.477	<b>.760</b>	-.118
SB	.277	<b>.604</b>	-.387
AF	.143	<b>.790</b>	.139
SF	-.259	-.008	<b>.804</b>
MC	-.198	.013	<b>.760</b>

Table 4b

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

In the above table 1.4b, rotated component matrix and percentage of variances for each component of 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal of ego function, have been depicted. Eigen values greater than 1 have been extracted; hence three components have been identified as it explained 67% of total variability with 33% loss of information. As 1<sup>st</sup> component alone explained 41%, only 1<sup>st</sup> factor is considered for the discussion in the present study.

1<sup>st</sup> component is highly correlated with Reality testing (.703), Judgment (.881), Sense of Reality (.724), Drive control (.805) and object relation (.638) evident from above rotated component matrix table 1.4b. So, Reality testing, Judgment, Sense of Reality, drive control and object relation have been identified as the most representative constellation of total 12 constellations of ego function in 2<sup>nd</sup> Appraisal.

Dependant Variable	Predictor Variable	Adjusted R square	Significance	Beta
1 <sup>st</sup> Appraisal- Dissolution potential	OR	.102	.01	-.347
2 <sup>nd</sup> appraisal-Despair	1.DC	.111	.01	-.359
	2.DC	.169	.01	-.491
	OR		.04	-.302

Table 4c: Stepwise Multiple regression with component 1 of two appraisals

- It was also observed from above Table 4c that Object Relation among other constellation of component 1, alone predicted the variance of dissolution potential by 10.2% in 1<sup>st</sup> appraisal. The negative b values suggest the positive impact of object relation on the Dissolution potential of marital quality.
- In 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal, Drive Control alone predicted the variance of despair domain of marital quality by 11.1% while object relation jointly with Drive Control explain 16.9% variance in 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal. The negative b values suggest the positive impact of object relation on the Dissolution potential of marital quality.

#### 4. Discussion

It is evaluated from the Table 1 that there is significant mean difference between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal regarding domain of Drive Control. A deficit in drive control in female partners has been observed in 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal in comparison to the females' self-appraisal of their drive-control (1<sup>st</sup> appraisal). Drive Control is person's ability to tolerate anxiety, depression, disappointment, frustration, ability for postponing expected satisfaction when required and delay response to prompting for discharge of inner tension or for gratification (Moore & Fine, 1968). Expression of inner wishes, emotional strivings and urges in a harmonious and modulated manner is the function of one's adequate drive control. When wife appraises that husband perceives the wife as less efficient in self-controlling as compared to the wife's version about herself, it may not appear to the wife as a respectful evaluation by the spouse for her, leading to significantly poor marital quality. This appraised underestimation in drive control by the spouse is further derogatory for their marital quality as the correlation between drive control and marital quality suggests that better the second appraisal in favor of greater drive control in females, better is their marital quality. The findings of correlations substantiate the females' expectation to be positively appraised by the spouse on this domain.. The negative 'b' value in regression analysis (Table1.3) also suggests positive appraisal of drive control facilitates marital contentment and satisfaction. It presumably is because of the fact that women's socialization develops more centering the interpersonal relationship (Diedrick, 1988). Thereby, women find their worth more along the positive appraisal of moral dimension of esteem related to kindness and goodness. This deficit appraisal of drive control, may induce a sense of personal inferiority and self-doubt in married young women, thereby under-estimation in drive control by their spouse could have an all-pervasive negative impact on their marital quality.

The ego is sometimes seen as using its own energy, which is termed as autonomy. it is developed outside the sphere of conflict of id-ego. so, it was autonomous and independent of drive satisfaction. These functions include perception, learning, intelligence, intuition, language, thinking, comprehension and mobility (Bellak, 1973). The results (table-1.1) indicate that females' appraisal of their autonomous functioning & their perception to be appraised by their spouse regarding autonomous functioning differed significantly, where females perceived their spouse to appraise their autonomy significantly greater than their self-appraisal. It is surprisingly directly correlated to marital quality score suggesting poor marital quality in the female partners with greater appraisal of autonomy by their spouses, which is evident from Table 3.

Being a part of male dominating society, women have a prescribed societal role for maintaining passivity or submissive attitude. Particularly home makers love to proclaim their male partners as superior to them in every sphere of life. There is gender difference in self-concept (Hare-Mustin & Maracek, 1990; Skaalvik, 1990; Wylie et al., 1979; Stake, 1992). Men engage in behaviors which are more dominant, competitive and autonomous while females being feminine are more expressive, warm and submissive (Ashmore et al. 1986). Girls and women tend to rate themselves higher on self-concept measures that tap the ability to establish and maintain harmonious relationships with others, and on measures that reflect moral goodness and virtue (Gadzella & Williamson, 1984; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Monge, 1973; Skaalvik, 1990; Stake, 1992) while boys and men tend to rate themselves higher on measures that tap the ability to be persuasive, dominant, and leader like, and on measures that reflect the capacity to cope and maintain inner stability under pressure (Andrews, 1987; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; McDonald & Gynther, 1965; Monge, 1973; Prescott, 1978; Stake, 1992; Zuckerman, 1989).

Autonomous functions in wife being appreciated by the husband is not positively valued by the wife may be owing to its mismatch with her socially accepted self-perception of enjoying a dependent role with husband. It is perhaps more pronounced as these women are home makers and do not strive for high achievement to fulfill their own need, rather they love to fulfill their achievement dream through the achievement of their husbands. If the female partner enjoys dependent role, perception of the spouse not encouraging that dependence role may be threatening or could be not in consonance with their enjoyment of self as less autonomous. Moreover, this appraisal of female spouse as more autonomous could arouse a feeling of humiliation particularly, in the non-working female subjects as it may be perceived by the females as a reflection of husband's preference for more autonomous lady to be a spouse and thereby they are not up to the level of the expectation of the spouse. Rather the females perceive a discouraging attitude in the spouse to their socially prescribed dependent and submissive role which they enjoy with a feeling of pride. It may be considered as devaluation for their oneness with their spouse. Appraisal of autonomy was psychologically taxing for them which could deteriorate the females' marital quality.

Hartmann (1939) assumed that the Synthetic Integrative function of the ego reconciles often conflicting demands of the id, super ego & outside world. Results of correlation reveal that (table1.2) better the spouse was assumed to perceive the wives to use synthetic integrative function than the wives thought about themselves, greater the enhancement in quality of marital life in females which is also substantiated from negative b' value in regression analysis (Table1.3). But the poor appraisal of synthetic integrative functions in the female by their spouse as observed in second appraisal is derogatory to the female spouse, as it questions one's internal integrity. Females have interdependent self-concept. They view themselves more in terms of their relations with others (Cross & Madson, 1997). Being home -makers their whole meaning of life centers on their status in home. It is not at all deferential for a woman to be underestimated in the domain of one's inner integrity by the person who is in the most intimate relationship with her, whose appraisal adds meaningfulness to their lives; and particularly for a home-maker the husbands is the prime source to satisfy her need to perceive self with an integrated ego function.

Stimulus Barrier means responsiveness to physiological and psychological stimuli (Frued, 1920/1955). stimulus barrier thresholds is concerned with one's effectiveness of "coping mechanism" in relation to degree of sensory stimulation reflected through motoric behavior, affective states and cognitive processes. It is evident from Table 1 and Table 2 that males' significantly better appraisal of female in stimulus barrier is not well received by females and adversely influences the feeling of hope, satisfaction and affection in females. It may be because of the fact that females may take pride to consider their spouses as more potent and stronger than them.



The positive  $b'$  value in regression analysis (Table 1.3) also suggests better appraisal of stimulus barrier impedes marital contentment and satisfaction. It may be because of the fact that the wives may wish to see their husbands to take decisions and responsibilities and being active. Dependence and relying on the loved ones could characterize the feminine psyche, particularly the house-makers expect a sense of comfort and security.

Defensive functions are complex configurations made up of various combinations & sequences of behaviors, affects, ideas, the operations of which are explicable in terms of variety of "classical" defense mechanisms. Result indicates, according to females' perception they are appraised to use defensive function more by their husband compared to their own perception about themselves and it has significant positive correlation with feeling of despair signifying a deficit experience of quality of marital life of females. The females perhaps have the keen desire to be perceived as frank and transparent and want to believe that they are in a quite secure relationship. When they perceived their husbands to appraise them as using defensive functions more than they actually used, it was painful as well as distressing to the females because of difficulty to accept that there was a psychological distance between them for which they have to employ defensive maneuvers. (Item-"Do you feel that you can't handle the problems that come up your life from day to day? / Do you worry about what other people are saying about you?") Females enjoy their dependant role, they want their husband to solve their problems. As they appraise their husbands consider themselves as potent enough to solve their own daily life problems, it may be taxing for the females who seek special attention in this respect from their husbands. Men and women differ in the concepts of social relations; but both men and women view themselves in relation to other people. Women conceive of themselves more in terms of warm, one-to-one intimate relations (e.g. daughter, spouse, best friend etc.) whereas men conceive of themselves more in terms of social groups and hierarchical relationships (e.g. boss, member of sports team etc.) [Roy & Sommer, 1997].

Table 2 Moreover, in further analysis with PCA of two appraisals of ego function, it can be evaluated that Reality testing, Sense of reality and object relations are the common constellations which have been appraised to have maximum loading on ego function domain by the females. As the females have been screened through GHQ (General health questionnaire), it was expected to have adequate reality testing, sense of reality and object relations in them. Reality testing refers to accuracy of perception and interpretation of basic external events and internal events evident from items like- "Can you see things that other people can't see/hear things that other people can't hear/confused about where you are?". Whereas Sense of reality refers to the extent of depersonalization, a sense of self, a stable body image (Item - "do you think that parts of your body don't belong to you?"). Since these three domains represent maintenance of adequate functional life, it was expected that reality testing and sense of reality are the grounding factors in all the constellations in a normal functioning person.

Object relation refers to the degree of closeness or distance in maintaining object relations (Item-Do you feel no body is really your friend? / Do you wish, in general, that people would stay mentally distant from you?) In both appraisals, females value "degree of psychological closeness to others" play an important role in maintaining psychological wellbeing. From Table 4c, it is seen that in 1st appraisal, object relation alone explains 10.2% of variance in dissolution potential domain of females' marital quality, whereas in 2<sup>nd</sup> appraisal, it jointly contributes with drive control by 16.9% of total variance of despair domain of females' quality of marital life signifying females' appraisal of object relation play important role on their quality of marital life.

The unique characteristics of both appraisals in Principal component analysis (PCA) were thought process, autonomous functioning and defensive functioning for 1st appraisal; drive control and judgment for 2nd appraisal. Interestingly, it is seen that in 1st appraisal females value thought process but in 2nd appraisal, they don't think it will be equally valued by their husband. Thought process refers to memory, attention, concentration and ability of conceptualization. (Item-Do you feel that you have no control over your thoughts? / Do you find yourself shifting from one topic to another in your conversation?) So, this may be related to home-maker feminine psyche where they appraise to be perceived as passive and dependant on their husbands and want their husband to take necessary decisions.

Autonomous functioning refers to self controlling in different situations (Item- "Do you find it hard to get started on something you want to do?/ Can you stay in control of yourself when other people seem to break down?). Females perceived, adequate self control can be one of the representatives of their total ego functions. But again according to females' view, their husband did not give much value of autonomous functioning.

Defensive functioning refers to the extent to which defense mechanisms affect behavior (Item-"Do things upset you? / "Are you an anxious person?"). Females perceived it important to use defensive functions to control their anxiety and depression so they value this constellation more in self-view rather when they perceived their husbands view about themselves.

Drive control refers to the extent of effectiveness of delay, controlling impulses and degree of frustration tolerance (Item-Are you an impatient person? / Do you feel unable to control any of your urges or impulses?). Females perceived that their husbands view that drive control has maximum loading of their ego function. According to Table 4c, 2nd appraisal of females' drive control have maximum loading (10.2%) on female's despair domain of marital life. According to females, husband prioritized drive control as an important component of ego functions which was not prioritized by the females' self-view of themselves, which again may help us to detect females' dependant role for the present study.

Judgment refers to appropriate behavior to relevant aspects of external reality (Item-Do you become disappointed in the friends you make?; Do people misunderstand the things you do?). Females appraised their husbands underestimated them in the judgment domain and also valued judgment domain on total ego function of the females which was not prioritized by females' self-view. It may be due to the fact that females take pride and comfort to depend on the decisions about external reality which may give them a sense of security from their husbands.

Be it underestimation or overestimation by their husbands, if the appraisal mismatches the female partner's self-appraisal it adversely affects their quality of marital life.

## 5. Conclusion

It is evident from the discussion that females' impression of greater appraisal by spouses (males) of autonomous function was detrimental for the marital quality of the female which may be due to its interference with the females' prescribed societal role and discourage the feeling of one-ness with their spouses.

Females' positive acceptance of male domination enhanced their marital quality which may be attributed to their enjoyment of being dominated by their spouse as it satisfied their needs for dependence and enjoy the feelings of oneness.

Moreover, female psyche is concerned with interpersonal relation and intimacy. While they perceived that their spouse appraised them to be more defensive, it reduced their marital quality, perhaps as it is contrary to their value of being transparent and frank in an intimate relationship.

Females' appraisal to be underestimated of synthetic integrative function and drive control by their spouses hinders females' quality of marital life which may be because that it may induce inferiority and self-doubt in females as it questions their inner integrity.

Our findings may have therapeutic implication in understanding the female psyche that is her expectation, pleasure and pain in an intimate relationship that would be helpful to minimize conflict between the marital couples.

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